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Letter dated 12 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour of writing to inform you that the First World Biotechnology Forum will be held in Concepción, Bío-Bío Region, Chile, from 9 to 12 December 2003. This event is being organized by the Chilean Government and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

Over the last three decades, biotechnology has undergone a revolution that has made it, along with the development of the "information society", into one of the pillars of knowledge-based economies, which increasingly seem to be concentrated in the industrialized countries, creating a growing gap between them and the developing countries.

The purpose of the Forum is to study the relationship between biotechnology and industry (bio-industry). To this end, the discussion will be focused on four sub-topics: bioethics; regulatory framework (biosafety, people, environment and patents); development (knowledge management, capabilities, industrial opportunities and strategic alliances); and networks (national, international, public and private). What is important is that advances in each and every one of these areas should actually be used to benefit all humanity and be developed in a manner consistent with internationally accepted ethical principles and values.

In order to obtain the widest possible dissemination and ensure the participation of Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, representatives of the private sector and civil society in this Forum devoted to the development of biotechnology and the international cooperation to this end, the Government of Chile plans to introduce a draft resolution during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly under the sub-item entitled "Science and technology for development".

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I should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter circulated as a document of the Second Committee of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Juan Gabriel **Valdés**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative